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PROCEEDINGS OF LEARNED SOCIETIES.

ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

Aug. 13, 1839.—William Yarrell, Esq., Vice-President, in the Chair.

A collection of Bird-skins, from the neighbourhood of Erzeroom, presented to the Society by E. D. Dickson, and H. J. Ross, Esqrs., was exhibited.

The species contained in this collection were brought under the notice of the Meeting by Mr. Fraser, and the following notes (made by Messrs. Dickson and Ross) which accompanied them, were read.

Buteo ———? August 20†. Very common: arrives middle of March, and leaves middle of November.

* *Falco tinnunculus*, Linn. M†. April 28. Common. Iris dark hazel. A mouse found in its stomach. This bird was perched on a tree, with some starlings and sparrows.

Falco tinnunculus, Linn. F. April 29. A bird and a frog found in its stomach. Five well-developed eggs in the ovarium. Another had eight eggs, besides a great many small ones, and its stomach contained a frog and some scaly substances, probably a portion of a fish. It breeds in April, on lofty poplars, and also on the top of minarets. Arrives early in April and departs late in November.

Falco Æsalon, Temm. M. April 23. Eyes large, round, and of a bluish-black colour: rim of eyelids, cere, and legs, bright yellow. A great number of thin tough worms, from one to two inches long, between the peritoneum and muscles on the left side: neither stomach nor intestines contained any.

Milvus ater, Gould. M. May 10. Common. Shot on a tree close to the town. Eyes large, of a light cinnamon colour, and with a black ring round the iris. Testicles reniform; yellow. Arrives middle of March.

Noctua Indica, Franklin. August 1. Common about the foot of the mountains near the town.

† The date when the specimen was procured.

* The species marked with an asterisk have been noticed in the Proceedings as inhabitants of Trebizond, a locality not far distant from Erzeroom. See Proceedings for 1834, pp. 50 & 133; for 1835, p. 90; and for 1837, p. 126.

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Cypselus murarius, Ill. M. May 24. Very abundant. Arrives beginning of May, leaves late in September.

Merops Apiaster, Linn. F. May 20. Gizzard full of insects. Arrives middle of May, leaves latter end of September.

**Coracias garrulus*, Linn. September 6. Common in various localities. Arrives early, and departs late in September.

Collurio minor, Vig. August 6. Common. Frequents haycocks. Arrives beginning of August, leaves middle of September.

Oriolus galbula, Linn. F. September 2. Rather rare. Found in willow-trees. Arrives early in August and departs middle of September.

**Cinclus aquaticus*, Bechst. F. December 9. Very few seen. Frequenting a mountain stream. Shy: flies rather high: food, small crustacea. Eyes light hazel. Two small oval appendages, one on each side of the rectum; hollow, and communicating with its cavity. The down on the breast very thick.

Motacilla alba, Linn. Not uncommon. Arrives end of September and departs end of October. Migratory.

Budytes melanocephala, Savi. M. June 7. Very common on moist ground: food, insects. Arrives middle of April and leaves early in November.

Phenicura rutililla, Swains. M. April 29. A straggler: found in a garden in Erzeroom.

**Saxicola Œnanthe*, Bechst. Eyes hazel. Frequents rills; also found on adjacent hills.

Saxicola Œnanthe, Bechst. M. May 27. Common all over the neighbourhood. Food, coleopterous insects and caterpillars.

Saxicola rubetra, Bechst. A few seen in April.

**Erythaca rubecula*, Swains. (In spirit.) Found in a stony ravine in November; the only one yet noticed.

Sylvia hippolais, Penn. August 15. A few seen on high thistles, in moist situations, from the commencement of April to the middle of October. Migratory.

Salicaria Cetti? Gould. October 28. Caught in a stable after the first falls of snow. Neither this bird nor several others of the same family procured at the time had any tails.

Anthus arboreus, Bechst.

Anthus rufescens, Temm. F. June 2. Found on the adjacent hills. Gizzard filled with coleopterous insects.

Alauda Calandra, Pall. Rather numerous: frequents fields. Arrives end of October and departs late in September. Migratory.

Alauda arvensis, Linn. Very common in summer.

**Alauda* ———? Not very common. Food, the grain found among horses' dung. This variety differs from the preceding species in the construction of the bill. It is only found in winter, and occurs in flocks, in company with the Horned Lark (*Alauda penicillata*).

Alauda brachydactyla, Temm. Seen in large flocks. Only noticed from 21st of April to 28th of May. Frequents fields and the hills. The cock is of a brighter colour than the hen, and has its ears and the spot on the breast much darker.

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Alauda penicillata, Gould †. Numerous: food, seeds. The specimens sent are not so bright as the living bird, probably from the effects of the arsenical soap. The males differ from the females in being of a brighter colour, and in having the black feathers on the top of the head much more distinctly marked. The yellow gorget of both, in winter is bright, and in summer remarkably faint, while the purple on the nape is *vice versa*. During the hot months they are found on the neighbouring mountains, from which they are driven down to the plain in winter in quest of food, which consists then of the grain found in the dung of cattle, the ground being at that time covered with snow several feet in depth. They fly in companies of from three to twelve birds; are very familiar, especially so in winter, when they may be killed easily with an ordinary whip. When approached, or in the agonies of death, they erect their horn-shaped crest quite perpendicularly, with the tips curved inwards. They run on the snow with surprising rapidity: as soon as the snow has melted on the plain they return to the mountains.

**Emberiza miliaria*, Linn. M. & F. April 23, June 5. Common in the fields close to Erzeroom. Feed on corn.

**Pyrgita domestica*, Cuv. M. Excessively common. Begin to pair and build about the end of April and beginning of May.

Pyrgita petronia, Gould. M. May 28. Very common, observed in the spring and summer months in steep and stony ravines. Gizzard filled with wheat and chaff.

Fringilla nivalis? Linn. May 27. Rare: food, insects. Found in the neighbouring hills.

Linaria montana, Ray. October 14. Noticed from the 20th of September to the 18th of November, in companies.

Fringilla sanguinea, Gould †. May 28. Tolerably common. First appears on the neighbouring hills, and afterwards in the plains, at no great distance from them. Food, the unripe seeds of the *Cichoraceæ*. The young bird has a lighter plumage, and its skin is of a deep pink colour. Arrives in the middle of May, and departs in the middle of September.

Pterocles arenarius, Temm. M. & F. Very common. Iris dark hazel; margin of eyelids pale light yellow. Food, grain, vetches, tares, &c. Said to breed towards the end of April, on the adjoining hills, amongst loose stones. Arrives in the beginning of April; they are then seen in those fields that are free from snow, close to the town. In summer frequents bare sterile grounds. Quits Erzeroom about the end of September. Native name, *Bahghr-Kahrah* (Black Belly).

**Otis tetrax*, Linn. Very common in ploughed fields and on the skirts of the marsh. Arrives early in September, and departs in the middle of November. Native name, *Mez-mel-dek*.

Glareola limbata, Rüpp. September 8. Rare. In flocks in marshy situations.

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Vanellus Keptuschka, Temm. September 17. A few observed from the middle of September to the middle of October. In flocks. This specimen sent had its right leg shrivelled up.

Charadrius morinellus, Linn.

Charadrius minor, Meyer. June 26. Numerous on the sandy and pebbly banks of the Aras at Hassán-Kaléh (18 miles east of Erzeroom), about the middle of June. The naked rim round the eye is of a deep sulphur colour. None of these birds have been noticed at Erzeroom.

Tringa subarquata, Temm. Numerous about the streams at So-ook-Tcherméh, a village four miles from Erzeroom.

Tringa minuta, Leisl. August. Plentiful at Tchif-lík, a village five miles distant, close to the houses, about pools, in company with sparrows and starlings.

Tringa minuta, Leisl. September 15. Abundant at the village of So-ook-Tcherméh.

Limosa melanura, Leisl. November 15. One leg had apparently wasted and dropped off, and the other was found in an incipient state of atrophy, like that in *Vanellus Keptuschka*, Temm., but not in so great a degree.

**Himantopus melanopterus*, Meyer. End of July. Not very common. On the borders of the river. A naked rim round the eyelid, of a bright vermilion colour.

Ardea alba, Linn. Not many: seen only at the river, from the commencement of May till the beginning of October. Sometimes in flocks and sometimes solitary.

Ibis Falcinellus, Temm. End of August. Seen during the hot months at the river.

Ibis ——— ? End of August. Not uncommon: about the river in August. Food, shell-fish: has a remarkably thick gizzard.

Fulica ater, Linn.

Tadorna rutila, Steph. August 30. Very abundant: gregarious. During the day frequents marshes, but feeds late in the evening and early in the morning, in corn and stubble-fields. Arrives in the middle of March and departs at the end of November: rarely seen in the water. Said to breed in the marshes. Great numbers on the Lake of Van in August. Native name, *Ahn-goót*.

Sterna nigra, Linn. Very common about the river during spring and summer.

The collection also contains specimens of *Cricetus accedula* (*Mus accedula* of Pallas.), which species is "very common. The eyes are large and black; cheek-pouches spacious, extending from the angles of the mouth to the back of the head, a little beyond the ear. It is

† The river referred to in this paper is the *Karah-Soo*, or northern branch of the Euphrates.

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at the end of March and departs at the end of November. During summer frequents the river†, but on its arrival and previous to its departure it is found in moist fields near Erzeroom. Native name, *Kiz-Cooshóo* (Maiden's Bird), or *Kahmaum-Cooshóo* (Bath-bird).

Vanellus Keptuschka, Temm. September 17. A few observed from the middle of September to the middle of October. In flocks. This specimen sent had its right leg shrivelled up.

Charadrius morinellus, Linn.

Charadrius minor, Meyer. June 26. Numerous on the sandy and pebbly banks of the Aras at Hassán-Kaléh (18 miles east of Erzeroom), about the middle of June. The naked rim round the eye is of a deep sulphur colour. None of these birds have been noticed at Erzeroom.

Tringa subarquata, Temm. Numerous about the streams at So-ook-Tcherméh, a village four miles from Erzeroom.

Tringa minuta, Leisl. August. Plentiful at Tchif-lík, a village five miles distant, close to the houses, about pools, in company with sparrows and starlings.

Tringa minuta, Leisl. September 15. Abundant at the village of So-ook-Tcherméh.

Limosa melanura, Leisl. November 15. One leg had apparently wasted and dropped off, and the other was found in an incipient state of atrophy, like that in *Vanellus Keptuschka*, Temm., but not in so great a degree.

**Himantopus melanopterus*, Meyer. End of July. Not very common. On the borders of the river. A naked rim round the eyelid, of a bright vermilion colour.

Ardea alba, Linn. Not many: seen only at the river, from the commencement of May till the beginning of October. Sometimes in flocks and sometimes solitary.

Ibis Falcinellus, Temm. End of August. Seen during the hot months at the river.

Ibis ——— ? End of August. Not uncommon: about the river in August. Food, shell-fish: has a remarkably thick gizzard.

Fulica ater, Linn.

Tadorna rutila, Steph. August 30. Very abundant: gregarious. During the day frequents marshes, but feeds late in the evening and early in the morning, in corn and stubble-fields. Arrives in the middle of March and departs at the end of November: rarely seen in the water. Said to breed in the marshes. Great numbers on the Lake of Van in August. Native name, *Ahn-goót*.

Sterna nigra, Linn. Very common about the river during spring and summer.

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one of our domestic mice. In winter it is sometimes found on the snow; its fur is then silky and glossy."

The common mouse (*Mus musculus*) is said to be very common in houses at Erzeroom.

The Spalax (*Spalax typhlus*, Illig.), a specimen of which is also sent, is said to be "common all over the plain. Its food is roots, but it will readily eat bread: its paws are thick and fleshy: it is very expert in burrowing, which it performs with all four of its feet. The pericardium is excessively thin and transparent, and without any traces of fibrous texture. The left lung is entire, and the right one divided into four lobes; heart, pancreas and kidneys, natural; peritoneum of exactly the same structure and appearance as the pericardium; liver five-lobed, with a small appendix; a large thick, round blotch (resembling an ulcer) on the inner surface of the great curvature of the stomach; spleen narrow, very much elongated, and adhering to the posterior and left side of the stomach; *capsula renales* firmly attached to the upper end of the kidneys; cæcum and *appendix vermiformis* of an enormous size, in proportion to the intestines: between the rectum and bladder a flat white substance, of a follicular structure, and terminating at its posterior extremity in a thick fleshy canal. Native name, *Kior-Seetchán* (Blind Rat)."

MISCELLANEOUS.

BOTANICAL INFORMATION.

"*Unio Itineraria.*"

BELIEVING that many readers of the Annals of Natural History are unacquainted even with the existence of the Society whose notice is now about to be laid before them, it may not be amiss in the first place just to give a concise account of its simple organization and government before making known the Report of its present operations and progress; both the Report and the short account thereto prefixed have been translated and carefully abridged from the printed circular of the Society and from the file of correspondence received by their London agent from the Secretaries, Drs. Steudel and Hochstetter: the latter—the correspondence—comes down to the 20th March, 1840.

Abstract from the laws of the Society:—

"1. The Wurtemberg Natural History Travelling Union, generally known among botanists as the '*Unio Itineraria*,' consists in a society of the friends of natural history (especially botany), who at their general expense send out and support travellers and collectors of specimens illustrative of natural history, chiefly botanical, in the

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